

MsSC 1

Edmond Kidder Pendergast, papers. .5 l.f.

Abstract:

Edmond Kidder Pendergast (1862-1916), was land speculator and attorney who practiced law in Spokane Falls, Waterville, Conconully, and Okanogan, Washington.

Biography:

Edmond Pendergast was born in MA in 1862. He attended the University of Michigan law school, graduating in 1889, after which he came to Spokane Falls, Washington Territory, where he set up a law practice a month after a fire destroyed the business district of the city. He also worked with real estate speculators. In November 1890 Pendergast moved to Waterville, Douglas County, established his law practice and became county attorney. He later moved to Conconully, then to Okanogan, where he remained until his death in 1916.

Scope and content:

The collection consists of letters, many of which are lengthy and detailed, from Pendergast to his family in Hutchinson, MN, 1889-1894. He describes the rebirth of Spokane Falls, recovering from its great fire of August 1889, and the frantic real estate speculation going on there. Pendergast sees great promise in agricultural lands and townsites, and becomes financially involved in several schemes, including Kettle Falls. At Waterville he again invests in agricultural lands with the hope of becoming financially independent. The Depression of 1893 and the ensuing "hard times" cast a pall over the eastern Washington real estate speculation schemes. Pendergast discusses the details of daily life in Spokane Falls as it rebuilds after the fire and his optimism for making money in real estate in eastern Washington. After his move to Waterville he talks of politics, prohibition, and the economy of the area.

Inclusive dates: 1889-1894

Restrictions: None

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Box	folder	content
1	1	Correspondence, 30 September 1889-15 February 1890. Real estate investment opportunities in Spokane Falls, rebuilding, Kettle Falls speculation, pessimism in certain circles, law business.

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| 1 | 2 | Correspondence, 21 February 1890-8 May 1890. Kettle Falls townsite, speculation in agricultural lands and town lots, law practice. |
| 1 | 3 | Correspondence, 11 May 1890-21 September 1890. Law practice, Spokane Falls exposition, list of law books required. |
| 1 | 4 | Correspondence, 6 October 1890-2 December 1890. Money invested there will yield ten times as much as Minnesota, fine agricultural products, Indian reservations to be thrown open soon, "This country has everything to make it the richest spot on earth," gives up on Kettle Falls, moves to Waterville, needs law books badly, think law practice will be good here, his father sends a list of questions he wants answered, bank starting, farmers have wheat but no market. |
| 1 | 5 | Correspondence, 23 December 1890-2 June 1891. [Ghost Dance] craze in southern Idaho, "they lynched an Indian in the next county north yesterday," Panama Canal, slight earthquake, eleven lawyers in town, land is increasing dramatically in price. |
| 1 | 6 | Correspondence, 6 June 1891-12 October 1891. Waterville growing, many attorneys in town, appointed county attorney, sleeps in office. |
| 1 | 7 | Correspondence, 15 October 1891-11 February 1892. Will have electric lights in a week, substantial improvements in town, "we have four saloons and two preachers," busy with criminal business, winter weather, hopes of a railroad, "more college graduates here than in Hutchinson," appointed city attorney. |
| 1 | 8 | Correspondence, 3 March 1892-27 December 1892. Railroad news, Spokane is humming, defeated as city attorney. |
| 1 | 9 | Correspondence, 12 January 1893-6 June 1893. Times are dull, snow blockade, wreck on railroad, snow deep, land valuable. |
| 1 | 10 | Correspondence, 14 June 1893-18 December 1893. Eight banks have gone broke in state, go to Seattle or stay in Waterville, no rain, no mosquitoes, cattle stealing, married. |
| 1 | 11 | Correspondence, 14 January 1894-25 May 1894. Recession, no money around, mostly barter or trade, saloon men are enemies, prohibitionists, hard times. |
| 1 | 12 | Miscellaneous. Legal matters. |